

DOUG BUFFONE'S



BEAR REPORT

A NEWSPAPER DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE CHICAGO BEARS AND THE NFL.

Vol. 11, No. 22 December 29, 1986

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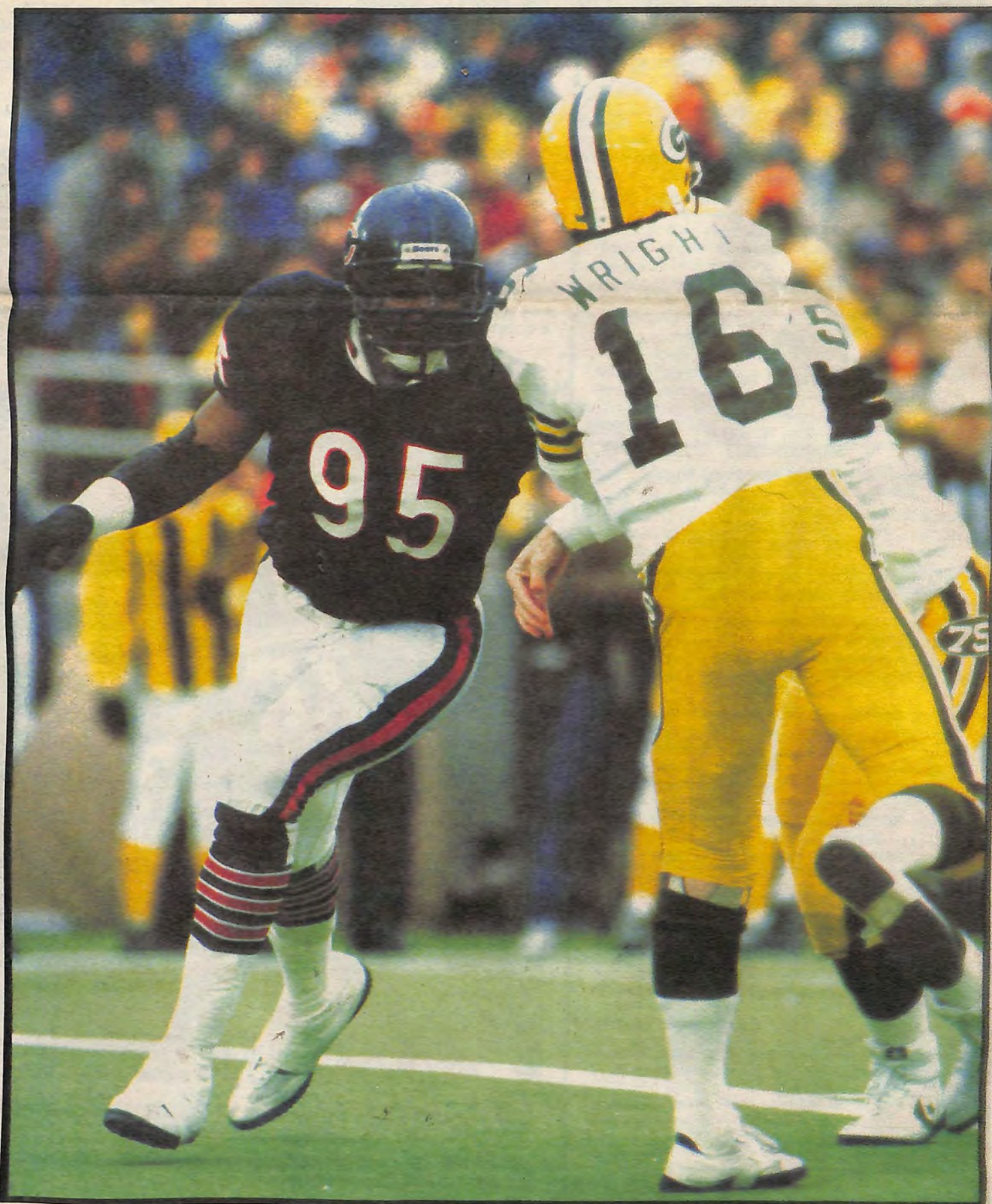
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A newspaper devoted exclusively
to the Chicago Bears and the NFL
Vol. 11, No. 22 December 29, 1986

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Despite missing the Pro Bowl team this year, Richard Dent has put a lot of pressure on quarterbacks. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)



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Commentary



By
Doug
Buffone



Success starts at the top

With the Bears ending this season at 14-2 and going 29-3 over the last two years, you have to give credit to the entire Chicago organization for the success of the team.

That credit should start at the top with president Michael McCaskey and general manager Jerry Vainisi. They've put together the front office and players that have made the Bears so successful.

The Bears' philosophy of never standing still and always looking for ways to improve the team have obviously paid off. They've brought in quality players that have helped the team and kept the other players striving to improve.

The thing that impressed me about Chicago's win over Dallas Sunday was that each player played to his ability. The speed on this team is amazing. Their ability to chase people down is so good I've never seen it before.

The Bears looked like world beaters on Sunday. They're playing some of their best ball of the year, which is so important heading into the playoffs.

The Giants started playing very well about three weeks ago. The 49ers started playing great two weeks ago. And now the Bears are at the top of their game.

Momentum will help all three of those teams in the playoffs. For the Bears it's hard to find any area in which they're not playing well. It looks like they've finally found a quarterback for the playoffs in Doug Flutie.

For a guy who's played less than two months in the NFL, he's showed a lot of good things. He can find and hit the open receivers and scrambles well.

The running game, with the great play of the offensive line, is looking healthy. That has a lot to do with the Bears having the best offensive line in the league.

The offense had good drives and made big plays in the first half. You can't ask for much more.

And the defense continues to pour it on. The line constantly put pressure on the Dallas quarterbacks, and Otis Wilson and Richard Dent were constantly in the Cowboy backfield.

The special teams also played well with Kevin Butler and Maury Buford again kicking well. Neal Anderson continues to impress everyone on special teams. I don't know how he missed making the Pro Bowl team.

It was obvious the Bears went down there to play. They weren't just going to take things easy heading into the playoffs. They treated Sunday's game like a playoff game, which shows how badly the Bears want to make sure they're in top form. The game got them psyched up and in the right attitude as they head into the playoffs.

And I'm sure Chicago will carry that feeling all the way through the postseason.



Steve McMichael (76) and Richard Dent put pressure on Dallas quarterback Reggie Collier during Sunday's game in Dallas. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

Flutie earns starting job with win

By Michael Polzin
Managing Editor

IRVING, TX — Half of the mission is over and so far it's been a success.

The Bears completed their regular season with a 14-2 record after a 24-10 win over Dallas Sunday, and perhaps more importantly found themselves a starting quarterback for the playoffs.

It came as no surprise that coach Mike Ditka said Doug Flutie would most likely start for Chicago in the playoffs after Flutie led the Bears to all three of their touchdowns against Dallas.

"Right now I'm leaning very, very heavily that way," Ditka said after Sunday's game. "I doubt that I would lean any other way."

Flutie started the game at quarterback for Chicago and made the most of his first NFL start. He played only in the first half while staking the Bears to a 21-0 lead. Flutie completed eight of 14 passes for 152 yards, including two touchdown passes and one interception.

"I'm still making mistakes. I have to concentrate better and keep working," Flutie said. "I'm happier, but if it wasn't for a lot of big plays I might not be. It's a little erratic. It's still a little shaky, but the smoothing out process is still happening."

Things didn't start out well for the Bears or the Cowboys. Both teams fumbled twice in the opening quarter, losing the ball to the other side all four times.

But the Bears were able to overcome their mistakes and take a 7-0 first-quarter lead.

Chicago's touchdown, of course, was set up by a Dallas turnover when Reggie Collier, making his first NFL start for Dallas, was intercepted by Wilber Marshall at the Chicago 47-yard line.

Flutie then completed a 10-yard screen pass to Dennis Gentry and a 26-yard pass to Tim Wrightman to the one-yard line to set up the first score.

Walter Payton went the final yard for Chicago's first touchdown.

Flutie connects with Anderson

Flutie increased Chicago's lead to 14-0 on the first play of the second quarter when he hit Neal Anderson with a 58-yard touchdown pass. Anderson simply ran by the Cowboys' Bill Bates on the bomb.

Flutie then drove the Bears 91 yards in the last two minutes of the half to give the Bears a 21-0 halftime lead.

On the series Flutie completed a 15-yard pass to Emery



Richard Dent bears down on Dallas' Reggie Collier to register one of his two sacks in the season finale Sunday. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

Moorehead and ran for 19 yards to move the Bears near midfield.

"I thought he would go all the way once he got open," Ditka said about Flutie's scramble.

Flutie also could add another dimension to the Bears' offense with his scrambling ability. "When you have a quarterback that can scramble it puts tremendous pressure on the defense," said Bears' safety Gary Fencik.

A roughing the passer penalty against Dallas put the Bears on the Dallas 33 before Flutie found Willie Gault alone in the end zone for a 33-yard touchdown pass.

"His performance speaks for itself," Ditka said. "He makes things happen, period."

Ditka's only concern with Flutie was that he tried to audible too much. "The plays we had called would have worked," Ditka said.

Payton also liked what Flutie did but saw some room for improvement. "He gets a passing grade," Payton said. "We could keep him after school and give him a little tutoring and he'll be OK."

Things also happened that Ditka hoped wouldn't, namely all the turnovers Chicago had. Chicago fumbled 3 times in the game and was intercepted 3 times.

Payton had the Bears' first fumble of the game in the first quarter when he was hit hard on the shoulder that bothered him last week during practice. Payton left the game for a short time but returned despite the bruised shoulder.

Fumbles are bothering Ditka

Payton's fumble was the only one that didn't bother Ditka. "There's no excuse for the other fumbles," he said. "We've got to hold on to the football."

That's especially important for a team that runs the ball as much as the Bears do. Chicago's 161 yards rushing in the game clinched its fourth straight year in leading the NFL in team rushing. That's the first time any NFL team has done that since the 1939-42 Bears.

"That means a lot," Ditka said. "Maybe it proves there is a way you can win by running the football."

But the fumbles didn't hurt Chicago that much because, as Ditka said, "Fortunately our defense plays better than most other defenses. It doesn't hurt us as much as some teams."

Mike Tomczak started the second half for the Bears, and turnovers again were common.

Tomczak, on 1st and 10 from the Chicago 20, looked to Moorehead all the way on one pass and was intercepted by Eugene Lockhart at the Bears' 30-yard line.

On Dallas' next play Collier was forced back in the pocket by Otis Wilson and threw the ball to Steve McMichael for another interception.

The Bears moved quickly downfield after that on a 17-yard run by Payton and a 21-yard flea-flicker pass. Tomczak handed off to Payton, who flipped the ball back to Tomczak. Tomczak then hit Gentry downfield for the catch.

Kevin Butler ended up kicking a 31-yard field goal for a 24-0 Chicago lead in the final minutes of the third quarter.

Turnover leads to Cowboys' score

Dallas was able to turn another Bears fumble into some points in the fourth quarter. After Thomas Sanders fumbled on a run at the Dallas 44, the Cowboys moved to Chicago's 32 before Rafael Septien kicked a 50-yard field

Continued Page 14



Neal Anderson tried to make another spectacular save of a punt near the end zone Sunday, but the play was ruled a touchback because Anderson's foot was on the goal line when he knocked the ball back. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

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Bears-Cowboys Official Statistics

SCORING SUMMARY

Chicago	7	14	3	0	—	24
Dallas	0	0	0	10	—	10

Chicago, 1, 8:55, Payton 1-yd., Butler kick, 7-0
 Chicago, 2, 00:07, Anderson 58-yd. pass from Flutie, Butler kick, 14-0
 Chicago, 2, 14:36, Gault 33-yd. pass from Flutie, Butler kick, 21-0
 Chicago 3, 13:10, FG Butler 31-yds., 24-0
 Dallas, 4, 1:35, FG Septien 50-yds., 24-3
 Dallas, 4, 14:51, Renfro 11-yd. pass from Pelluer, Septien kick, 24-10
 Weather: Cloudy, 66% humidity, temperature: 52 degrees; wind and direction NE 10
 Attendance 57,256; tickets distributed 63,389; unused 6,123; time 3:16

FINAL TEAM STATISTICS

	Bears	Cowboys
TOTAL FIRST DOWNS	17	16
By Rushing	10	3
By Passing	6	11
By Penalty	1	2
THIRD DOWN EFFICIENCY	5-12	2-14
FOURTH DOWN EFFICIENCY	0-0	1-2
TOTAL NET YARDS	322	260
Total Off. Plays		
(Inc. times passing)	63	69
Av. Gain per Off. Play	5.1	3.7
NET YARDS RUSHING	161	110
Total Rushing Plays	38	25
Av. Gain Per Rush. Play	4.2	4.4
NET YARDS PASSING	161	150
Times Thrown —		
Yds. Lost Att. To Pass	3-12	7-67
Gross Yds. Passing	173	217
PASS ATT. — COMP. —		
HAD INTERCEPTED	22-9-3	37-18-3
Av. Gain Per Pass Play		
(Inc. times thrown passing)	6.4	3.4
PUNTS — NO. AND AV.	6-43.1	8-42.5
Had Blocked	0	0
TOTAL RET. YARDAGE	70	129
No. and Yds. Punt Ret.	6-49	2-5
No. and Yds. KO Returns	1-15	5-119
No. and Yds. Interc. Ret.	3-6	3-5
PENALTIES — NO. AND YDS.	5-33	8-60
FUMBLES — NO. AND LOST	3-3	2-2
TOUCHDOWNS	3	1
Rushing	1	0
Passing	2	1
Returns	0	0
EXTRA POINTS MADE — ATT.	3-3	1-1
FG MADE — ATT.	1-1	1-1
TIME OF POSSESSION	30:25	20:35

Dallas			Bears				
	T	A	S		T	A	S
Rohrer	6	3	0				
R. White	4	2	0	Jackson	6	0	0
Hegman	4	0	0	Duerson	4	3	0
Downs	3	2	0	Fencik	4	2	0
Jones	3	1	0	Richardson	4	1	0
Walls	2	2	0	Wilson	4	0	2
Bates	2	0	1/2	Marshall	4	0	1
Jax	2	0	0	Singletary	3	0	1
DeOssie	2	0	0	Perry	3	0	1
Lockhart	2	2	0	Gayle	2	0	0
Penn	2	1	0	Rivera	2	0	0
Pozderac	2	0	0	McMichael	2	1	0
Cosbie	2	0	0	Sanders	2	0	0
Scott	1	1	0	Douglass	1	1	0
Holloway	1	0	0	Phillips	1	0	0
Fellows	1	1	0	Harris	1	0	0
Albritton	1	3	0	Flutie	1	0	0
Smerek	1	0	1 1/2	Fuller	1	0	0
Jeffcoat	1	0	1	Anderson	1	0	0
Dutton	1	1	0	Van Horne	1	0	0
Brooks	1	0	0	Gault	1	0	0
Fowler	1	0	0	Moorehead	1	0	0
Hill	1	0	0	Dent	0	0	2
Saxon	0	1	0				

FINAL INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Bears				
RUSHING	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	LG
Payton	13	51	3.9	17
Suhey	4	16	4.0	10
Anderson	9	30	3.3	7
Thomas	5	25	5.0	8
Flutie	1	19	19	19
Gault	1	11	11	11
Sanders	2	3	1.5	2
Gentry	2	7	3.5	4
Fuller	1	-1	-1	-1



Willie Gault tries to get away from a couple of Dallas defenders after running a reverse Sunday for 11 yards. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

PASSING	Att.	Cmp.	Yds.	Int.
Flutie	14	8	152	1
Tomczak	6	1	21	1
Fuller	2	0	0	1

PASS RECEIVING	No.	Yds.	LG
Anderson	2	63	58
Gentry	2	31	21
Gault	1	33	33
Wrightman	1	26	26
Moorehead	1	15	15
Payton	1	5	5
Sanders	1	0	0

PUNT RETURNS	No.	Yds.	LG
Barnes	6	49	26

KICKOFF RETURNS	No.	Yds.	LG
Sanders	1	15	15

Dallas				
RUSHING	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	LG
Dorsett	11	65	5.9	21
Collier	5	32	6.4	16
Pelluer	2	8	4.0	5
Walker	5	3	0.6	1
Lavette	2	2	1.0	2

PASSING	Att.	Cmp.	Yds.	Int.
Pelluer	28	14	173	1
Collier	9	4	44	2

PASS RECEIVING	No.	Yds.	LG
Renfro	5	76	24
Sherrard	4	36	14
Walker	4	30	17
Banks	1	19	19
Dorsett	1	19	19
Newsome	1	19	19
Hill	2	18	9

PUNT RETURNS	No.	Yds.	LG
Banks	2	1	5

KICKOFF RETURNS	No.	Yds.	LG
Lavette	4	94	35
Clack	1	25	25

Special playoff issues set

The **BEAR REPORT** has set its printing schedule for special playoff issues. The issues will be sent at no charge to all subscribers.

The **BEAR REPORT** will publish on Dec. 29 to preview the Bears' first playoff game. There also will be coverage of the NFC Wild-Card game played the previous weekend.

Subscribers also will receive the paper the week of Jan. 5 with full coverage of Chicago's opening playoff game.

The Super Bowl preview issue will be published Jan. 19 and sent to subscribers that week.

The **BEAR REPORT** also will publish on Jan. 12 if the Bears play in the NFC championship game.

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Ditka rewriting the book on quarterbacks

Hindsight will be the judge of Mike Ditka's foresight in the little matter of quarterbacks and how the coach is handling them.

Ditka will either rewrite the coaching manual or be told to reread it. Instead of treating the Bear quarterbacks with kid gloves, he is treating them with no more respect than guards, for heaven's sake.

And Mike Tomczak and Doug Flutie are only kids! People think Ditka must be kidding.

Quarterbacks are supposed to be special. They are the team leaders. They provide stability. As quarterbacks go, so go wins, losses and coaches.



By
Don
Pierson

Conventional theory is to treat quarterbacks with reverence and respect and loyalty. If you don't, they might say nasty things about you on their radio shows. Every quarterback has a radio show and people with radio shows demand respect because they can say more nasty things than people with television shows can say.

For a team to change quarterbacks, or even think about it so late in a season, is worse than changing wives late in life. It causes more bother than worth.

Quarterback job is in the air

The Bears won six starts in a row with Tomczak starting at quarterback and Ditka announced that the quarterback job was "up in the air."

Even Flutie couldn't understand Ditka's reasoning, but he wasn't arguing.



MIKE TOMCZAK



DOUG FLUTIE

"I'm just trying to get myself into position to help this team win," Flutie said.

That's all Ditka is trying to do, too, but his method is considered mad in some circles.

It would be one thing to give Flutie some playing time during meaningless games in order to be prepared for emergency; it's quite another to throw the job open for application.

Instead of anointing Tomczak as his No. 1 man, Ditka has said only that competition is No. 1.

It was unsettling to Tomczak, not to mention Steve Fuller, who wasn't allowed into the competition until Tomczak injured his leg against Detroit.

It is also unsettling on other players, although not all of them will admit it. Split end Willie Gault said he dropped a pass while worrying about Tomczak's hurt feelings.

But Gault said he learned a lesson. And maybe that's all Ditka is trying to teach — that football players play and football coaches coach. The players didn't like Ditka's idea of hiring Flutie in the first place. Now that he's played, they like it better. Still, uncertainty at quarterback usually means the shakes in playoff games. Time will tell.

Tomczak himself seemed to be keeping a cool head while the situation around him heated up. Since he understands he has no choice, it helps not to look for one.

"Maybe he's testing me," Tomczak said before the Lions' game. "Maybe he's trying to see how far he can go before I break."

Ditka is not expansive on his motives for treating quarterbacks the same as flankers, fullbacks and tight ends.

"Most overrated thing I've seen in my life," Ditka said.

Ditka doesn't want mistakes

Ditka pointed out two things: the Bears don't have a Johnny Unitas around, and they don't need one with the defense they have.

All they need is a quarterback who doesn't make mistakes. Ditka is putting so much pressure on his quarterbacks not to make mistakes that game situations must seem easy.

Usually, coaches worry about stifling a quarterback's creativity by concentrating on mistakes under threat of expulsion. Ditka worries more about the mistakes than about the quarterback's psyche.

Former Eagles' coach Dick Vermeil interviewed Ditka for CBS-TV two weeks ago. When the show was aired, CBS used a clip of Vermeil on the sidelines telling Eagles' quarterback Ron Jaworski, "Now you know I would never

yank you."

Contrast that with Ditka telling former quarterback Bob Avellini: "I'm going to fire you!"

Creative tension is at the root of Ditka's coaching philosophy, even though he crosses his eyes at the mention of such a psychological expression.

After the Lions' game, which was treated like an exhibition until the final quarter, Ditka talked again of his reasoning on a subject that has captured the attention of the nation.

He said Flutie would start against Dallas and Fuller would play.

"This is not a closed book at all," he said. "I just think I have to follow through on the game plan I set for bringing in Mike and Doug and see where we're at going into the playoffs. If Steve ended up starting the playoffs, I wouldn't feel bad at all. It doesn't matter."

Ditka wants nothing more than to make critics and his players believe it really doesn't matter. Because if the world champions go into the playoffs relying on a quarterback to carry them, they would be as disappointed as most teams who rely on a quarterback to carry them. The Miami Dolphins, for example, have a quarterback who has passed for more than 40 touchdowns and they aren't even in the playoffs.

If Ditka allows his quarterback, whoever it is, to hand off and set up play-action passes, the importance of the quarterback does indeed decrease.

Ditka vows to simplify his attack and again concentrate on ball control and field position, which is all a great defense needs. Points, which aren't all that necessary, tend to come almost by accident.

"We can't have people running all over the field with different formations and expect the quarterback to read the defense and call plays," Ditka said.

If he follows his own advice, the Bears' playoff hopes brighten. After the impressive fourth-quarter comeback in Detroit — with straight-ahead handoffs and power football — the Bears seemed to make their coach a believer.

"All the other playoff teams have established quarterbacks," Ditka said. "I've got to play with the hand we were dealt. I didn't expect it to come down this way, but it did. I kind of like our position. The win in Detroit was nice to get and the way we won it showed a little of the character of our football team. Four years ago, it would have been just the opposite. We would have had no chance to win."



STEVE FULLER

15-game totals

Bears Defensive Stats

Player	Total	Solo	Assists	PD's	FR's	FC	BL	Sacks/Yds
Mike Singletary	126	65	61	8	1	1	0	1 / 9
Gary Fencik	123	62	61	10	1	1	0	1 / 11
Wilber Marshall	100	57	43	5	3	4	0	4.5 / 44
Dave Duerson	99	56	43	12	2	0	0	7 / 57
Otis Wilson	97	48	49	4	1	1	0	6 / 42
Steve McMichael	83	34	49	3	2	1	0	8.5 / 65
William Perry	78	47	31	1	0	2	0	4 / 33
Mike Richardson	63	42	21	16	0	1	0	0 / 0
Reggie Phillips	31	16	15	10	0	1	0	0 / 0
Dan Hampton	69	30	39	2	2	0	1	9.5 / 83
Richard Dent	73	30	43	4	0	4	0	9.5 / 65
Vestee Jackson	39	18	11	4	0	0	0	0 / 0
Todd Bell	13	7	6	2	1	0	0	0 / 0
Shaun Gayle	14	9	5	2	1	1	0	0 / 0
Mike Hartenstine	5	3	2	0	0	1	0	1 / -5
Henry Waechter	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
Al Harris	14	10	4	1	0	1	0	2 / 21
Ron Rivera	34	24	9	1	0	0	0	1 / 2
Jim Morrissey	7	2	5	1	0	0	0	0 / 0
Dan Rains	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
Maurice Douglass	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0

SPECIAL TEAM TACKLES			T	Solo	Asst.
Thomas Sanders	13	10	3	4	0
Jim Morrissey	15	13	2	2	0
Dan Rains	10	7	3	14	3
Ron Rivera	4	3	1	1	0
Shaun Gayle	9	5	4	0	1
Dave Duerson	3	2	1	0	1
Calvin Thomas	6	3	3	0	2
Al Harris	2	0	2	3	0
Maurice Douglass	1	1	0	1	0
Todd Bell	4	4	0	0	0
Keith Ortego	2	2	0	0	0
N. Anderson	17	14	0	0	0
K. Butler	1	1	0	0	0
V. Jackson	1	0	0	0	0
L. Rubens	1	0	0	0	0
E. Moorehead	2	0	0	0	0
R. Phillips	3	3	0	0	0
W. Marshall	1	1	0	0	0

Outrageous



The Bears have been outrageous this season and you can bet there'll be more to come. Follow the Bears in **Doug Buffone's Chicago Bear Report**. The only publication that gives you exclusive in-depth coverage of the Bears. Game stories, action photos, player profiles, complete statistics and much more.

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QB decisions nothing new to Landry

When Mike Tomczak went down with a bruised leg in the first quarter of the Detroit game Dec. 15, it looked like the Bears quarterback situation might have cleared up a little.

Coach Mike Ditka said after the game that Doug Flutie and Steve Fuller would split time in the Dallas game. And with Tomczak's future uncertain at the time it looked like Ditka would only have to decide who his starter would be between two quarterbacks instead of three.



Bear Notebook

But two days later Tomczak's leg was feeling better and by last Thursday he was practicing again. So now the Bears are back to three quarterbacks who could potentially start in the playoffs.

Flutie started at quarterback against Dallas, but Fuller and Tomczak also saw playing time.

Flutie and Fuller shared snaps equally in practice last Wednesday. When Tomczak was able to practice Thursday the snaps were split equally three ways.

Ditka was glad to see Tomczak recover quickly so he could get more playing time before the playoffs begin.

"Mike still needs some time on the field," Ditka said. "He didn't get much last week because of the injury."

The Bears played Sunday against a coach who has had his share of tough decisions to make about quarterbacks.

Tom Landry has been involved in two major quarterback battles while coaching the Cowboys. Roger Staubach and Craig Morton battled for the starting job in 1971, and Danny White was pushed by Gary Hogeboom just a few years ago.

"It's most difficult because you have to make decisions on how you feel at that time," Landry said. "It can vary from quarterback to quarterback depending on the circumstances. You just have to have a feel for it."

Of course the Bears situation is a little easier because the offense isn't pressed to score a lot of points. "When you have a defense like the Bears have, it sure helps everything," Landry said.



Neal Anderson celebrates after catching a 58-yard touchdown pass from Doug Flutie in the first half of Sunday's game. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)



Thomas Sanders (20) congratulates Walter Payton after Payton scored his 106th career rushing touchdown Sunday, tying him for the NFL record with Jim Brown. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

Which brings up another interesting question. Can a defense alone carry a team to a Super Bowl victory?

"It could have been done last year," Landry said. "It really takes an exceptional defensive team to do that. The Bears are the only one I've seen in a long time that have that capability."

But for a team to rely almost totally on its defense the defense must take charge of the entire game, Landry said. "They have to control the game themselves. They have to make the turnovers and create the field position that allows you to score."

Playoff tickets on sale

Ticket sales for the division playoff game at Soldier Field Jan. 3 or 4 began Monday at the stadium and all Ticketron outlets. Tickets also went on sale through Teletron, the telephone charge service, and can be ordered by calling (312) 853-3636.

There is a limit of four tickets per person and only cash payment will be accepted at Soldier Field. Tickets are priced at \$15 and \$22.

The Bears will face one of three teams in their first post-season game — the Washington Redskins, San Francisco 49ers or Los Angeles Rams.

Season ticket holders already have been mailed playoff tickets.

•**SPEAKING OF TURNOVERS**, that is probably Ditka's biggest concern with the offense right now.

"If we didn't turn the ball over one time, that would really be a major accomplishment," Ditka said before the Dallas game. "We're really struggling in that area."

Interceptions haven't been the only problem for Chicago in the turnover department. Fumbles have been more costly in the last few weeks. In November two weeks in a row, against Green Bay and Pittsburgh, the Bears fumbled and lost the ball at their opponents' one-yard line.

Against Detroit two weeks ago Chicago fumbled five times in the game, four times in the third quarter alone. One of those was at the Bears' one-yard line and set up Detroit's only touchdown of the game.

Chicago has fumbled the ball away 19 times this year. Only Los Angeles, with 22, has fumbled the ball away more in the NFC this year.

Chicago also has thrown 22 interceptions, third in the NFC behind Green Bay with 25 and Tampa Bay with 23. Chicago's 41 total giveaways is second in the NFC to Green Bay's 42. Chicago is only plus one in the giveaway/takeaway department.

•**GOING INTO THE LAST WEEK** of the season the Bears led the Falcons by 11 yards in the NFL in team rushing. The Bears have rushed for 2,539 yards, the Falcons for 2,528 yards. If the Bears hold that lead they'll become the first team since the 1939-42 Bears to win four straight NFL rushing titles.

"It could be a direct reflection of my mentality," Ditka said. "And when you have a great back like Walter Payton you have to use your running backs."

"The credit goes to the line. Overall, we block pretty darn well."

The Bears also are looking to lead the NFL for the third straight year in total defense. Going into the last game of the year the Bears have a 523-yard lead over the Raiders.

The Bears are second in the league in pass defense, 37 yards behind St. Louis. In rushing defense, Chicago is tied for second with Denver, 188 yards behind the Giants.

The Bears also could set a record for fewest points allowed in a 16-game season if they held the Cowboys to under 18 points. The record of 195 points is held by the 1978 Steelers. Last year the Bears allowed just 198 points.

•**THE BIGGEST ADVANTAGE** to having a two-week layoff before the playoffs, according to Ditka, is the players get a chance to rest.

"They've been at it a long time and deserve some time off," he said. "The coaches can get some work done, too. I'm sure the players are gonna rest and that's the best thing you can do now."

•**CENTER JAY HILGENBERG** suffered a broken bone in his left hand during the Detroit game but didn't miss any practice time because of it.

Other than Tomczak the only Bear to miss a practice last week was Payton, who didn't practice Wednesday because of a sore shoulder. Payton was back on Thursday, though.

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NFC Wild-Card Game

Washington vs. Los Angeles

Sunday, Dec. 28

RFK Stadium

Washington, DC



Washington Redskins Numerical Roster

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Yr.	College
10	Jay Schroeder	QB	6-4	214	25	3	UCLA
12	Steve Cox	P	6-4	195	28	6	Arkansas
14	Max Zendejas	K	5-11	184	23	R	Arizona
17	Doug Williams	QB	6-4	220	31	6	Grambling
22	Curtis Jordan	FS	6-2	204	32	10	Texas Tech
23	Todd Bowles	S	6-2	203	22	R	Temple
24	Kelvin Bryant	RB	6-2	195	26	1	North Carolina
28	Darrell Green	CB	5-8	170	26	4	Texas A&I
31	Ken Jenkins	RB/KR	5-8	185	27	4	Bucknell
32	Vernon Dean	CB	5-11	178	27	5	San Diego St.
35	Keith Griffin	RB	5-8	185	25	3	Miami (FL)
38	George Rogers	RB	6-2	229	27	6	South Carolina
40	Alvin Walton	S	6-0	180	22	R	Kansas
41	Tom Morrison	CB	6-1	195	23	R	North Carolina
45	Barry Wilburn	CB	6-3	186	22	2	Mississippi
46	Ricky Sanders	RB	5-11	180	24	1	SW Texas St.
48	Ken Coffey	S	6-0	190	26	3	SW Texas St.
51	Monte Coleman	LB	6-2	230	29	8	Central Arkansas
52	Neal Olkewicz	LB	6-0	233	29	8	Maryland
53	Jeff Bostic	C	6-2	260	28	7	Clemson
54	Joe Krakoski	LB	6-1	224	23	1	Washington
56	Calvin Daniels	LB	6-3	241	27	5	North Carolina
57	Rich Milot	LB	6-4	237	29	8	Penn State
58	Shawn Burks	LB	6-1	230	23	R	LSU
60	Dan McQuaid	T	6-7	278	26	2	Nev.-Las Vegas
63	Raleigh McKenzie	G	6-2	262	23	2	Tennessee
64	Steve Hamilton	DE	6-4	260	25	2	East Carolina
65	Dave Butz	DT	6-7	295	36	14	Purdue
66	Joe Jacoby	T	6-7	305	27	6	Louisville
68	Russ Grimm	G	6-3	275	27	6	Pittsburgh
69	R C Thieleman	G	6-4	262	31	10	Arkansas
71	Charles Mann	DE	6-6	270	25	4	Nevada-Reno
72	Dexter Manley	DE	6-3	257	27	6	Oklahoma St.
73	Mark May	T	6-6	295	27	6	Pittsburgh
74	Markus Koch	DE	6-5	275	23	R	Boise State
76	Ron Tilton	G	6-4	250	23	R	Tulane
77	Darryl Grant	DT	6-1	275	26	6	Rice
78	Dean Hamel	DT	6-3	275	25	2	Tulsa
81	Art Monk	WR	6-3	209	28	7	Syracuse
82	Anthony Jones	TE	6-3	248	26	3	Wichita State
84	Gary Clark	WR	5-9	173	23	2	James Madison
85	Don Warren	TE	6-4	242	30	8	San Diego St.
86	Clint Didier	TE	6-5	240	27	5	Portland St.
87	Terry Orr	TE	6-3	227	25	1	Texas
89	Clarence Verdin	WR/KR	5-8	160	23	1	SW Louisiana

HEAD COACH: Joe Gibbs

ASSISTANT HEAD COACHES: Richie Petitbon and Joe Bugel

ASSISTANT COACHES: Larry Peccatiello (defensive coordinator), Don Breaux, Charley Taylor, Jerry Rhome, Warren Simmons, Emmitt Thomas, LaVern "Torgy" Torgeson, Bill Hickman, Wayne Sevier, Dan Riley, John Dunn



RUNNING BACK ERIC DICKERSON

Los Angeles Rams Numerical Roster

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Yr.	College
1	Mike Lansford	PK	6-0	183	27	5	Washington
3	Dale Hatcher	P	6-2	200	23	2	Clemson
8	Steve Dils	QB	6-1	191	31	8	Stanford
10	Steve Bartkowski	QB	6-4	218	33	12	California
11	Jim Everett	QB	6-5	212	23	R	Purdue
20	Johnnie Johnson	S	6-1	183	29	7	Texas
21	Nolan Cromwell	S	6-1	200	31	10	Kansas
22	Vince Newsome	S	6-1	179	25	4	Washington
25	Jerry Gray	CB	6-1	183	23	2	Texas
29	Eric Dickerson	RB	6-3	220	25	4	SMU
30	Barry Redden	RB	5-10	205	25	5	Richmond
32	Tim Tyrrell	RB	6-1	201	25	3	N. Illinois
33	Charles White	RB	5-10	190	28	6	USC
45	Darren Long	TE	6-3	240	27	1	Long Beach St.
47	LeRoy Irvin	CB	5-11	184	28	7	Kansas
48	Tim Fox	S	5-11	186	32	11	Ohio St.
49	Mickey Sutton	CB	5-8	165	25	1	Montana
51	Norwood Vann	LB	6-1	234	24	3	East Carolina
52	Cliff Thrift	LB	6-2	235	30	8	E. Central OK
54	Mike Wilcher	LB	6-3	235	26	4	North Carolina
55	Carl Ekern	LB	6-3	222	31	10	San Jose St.
56	Doug Smith	C	6-3	260	29	9	Bowling Green
57	Jim Laughlin	LB	6-1	222	28	7	Ohio St.
58	Mel Owens	LB	6-2	224	28	6	Michigan
59	Mark Jerue	LB	6-3	229	26	4	Washington
60	Dennis Harrah	G	6-5	265	32	12	Miami (Fla.)
61	Tony Slaton	C	6-3	265	25	2	USC
66	Tom Newberry	G	6-2	279	23	R	Wisc.-La Crosse
67	Duval Love	T	6-3	263	23	2	UCLA
69	Greg Meisner	NT	6-3	265	27	6	Pittsburgh
71	Reggie Doss	DE	6-4	263	29	9	Hampton Institute
75	Irv Pankey	T	6-5	265	27	7	Penn St.
77	Gary Jeter	DE	6-4	260	31	10	USC
78	Jackie Slater	T	6-4	275	31	11	Jackson St.
80	Henry Ellard	WR	5-11	175	25	4	Fresno St.
81	David Hill	TE	6-2	235	32	11	Texas A&I
83	Kevin House	WR	6-1	185	28	7	S. Illinois
84	Chuck Scott	WR	6-2	202	23	1	Vanderbilt
87	Tony Hunter	TE	6-4	237	25	4	Notre Dame
88	Michael Young	WR	6-1	185	24	2	UCLA
89	Ron Brown	WR	5-11	181	25	3	Arizona St.
90	Mike McDonald	LB	6-1	230	28	3	USC
91	Kevin Greene	LB	6-3	248	24	2	Auburn
93	Doug Reed	DE	6-3	250	25	3	San Diego St.
98	Shawn Miller	NT	6-4	255	24	3	Utah St.
99	Alvin Wright	NT	6-2	285	25	1	Jacksonville St.

HEAD COACH: John Robinson

ASSISTANT COACHES: Larry Brooks, Dick Coury, Lew Erber, Marv Goux, Gil Haskell, Hudson Houck, Steve Shafer, Fritz Shurmur, Bruce Snyder, Norval Turner, Fred Whittingham

Special to the Bear Report

The winner of this year's NFC Wild Card game may be determined by default. Both the Redskins and Rams are entering next Sunday's contest at RFK Stadium in a state of despair.

Washington (12-4) is beginning the postseason tournament as a loser in two of its last three games. The Redskins survived a scare at Philadelphia last Sunday, winning 21-14 after trailing 14-0. A week earlier, they lost to the Broncos 31-30 due to a missed extra point by placekicker Max Zendejas.

"If this had been a big game, (Zendejas) would probably be running out of here to catch the first plane south of the border to save his life," said Washington safety Curtis Jordan.

"Every time you miss an extra point, it is an emotional turning point," added Washington head coach Joe Gibbs. "I'm not going to make any rash decisions, but Max has not been producing lately." Before the Eagles game, Gibbs replaced Zendejas with Jess Atkinson.

After defeating the Cowboys 29-10 on December 7, the Rams (10-6) had a three-game winning streak and a 1½-game lead over the second-place 49ers in the NFC West. But consecutive losses to the Dolphins (37-31 in overtime) and 49ers (24-14) cost the Rams the division crown and forced them to head for Washington to open

the playoffs.

"We've got to be the Rams again," says Los Angeles tackle Irv Pankey. "That's total domination."

"We have to go back to the old football philosophy," adds guard Dennis Harrah.

Washington offense vs. Los Angeles defense

Through 15 games, Washington's offense ranked 4th in the NFL, averaging 356 yards per game. The unit was 4th passing (245 per game) and 14th rushing (110 per contest). For the season, the Redskins scored 368 points, an average of 23 per game.

Washington quarterback Jay Schroeder, a three-year veteran out of UCLA, was voted to the Pro Bowl this year, his first full season as an NFL starter. Through 15 games, he ranked 5th in the NFC with a 73.9 rating. While he finished the regular season with 22 touchdown passes, his biggest problem in recent weeks has been interceptions. After being picked off only 11 times in the first 13 games, he threw 11 interceptions in the final three games, including three vs. the Eagles. But he also threw two touchdown passes in the victory at Philadelphia.

Schroeder has a pair of Pro Bowl receivers to throw to. Pro Bowl starter Gary Clark, who missed the regular season finale due to a sprained ankle, finished the campaign with 74 catches for 1,265 yards and seven touchdowns. Through 15 games, Art Monk had 69 catches for 1,029

yards and four touchdowns. Tight end Clint Didier has caught 32 for 657 and three TDs. Fellow tight end Don Warren, who had 19 catches for 162 yards through 15 games, caught his only touchdown pass of the season last Sunday.

Running back George Rogers ranked 6th in the NFC through game 15 with 1,139 yards on 285 carries, while Kelvin Bryant had only 250 yards on 64 carries and reserve Keith Griffin has rushed 62 times for 197 yards. Washington's offensive line, which had allowed 25 sacks through 15 games, includes Pro Bowl guard Russ Grimm.

Through 15 games, the Rams' defense ranked 6th in the league, allowing 297 yards per contest. The unit ranked 7th vs. the rush (100 yards per game) and 11th vs. the pass (197 per game). The defense has allowed 267 points, an average of 16.7 per game.

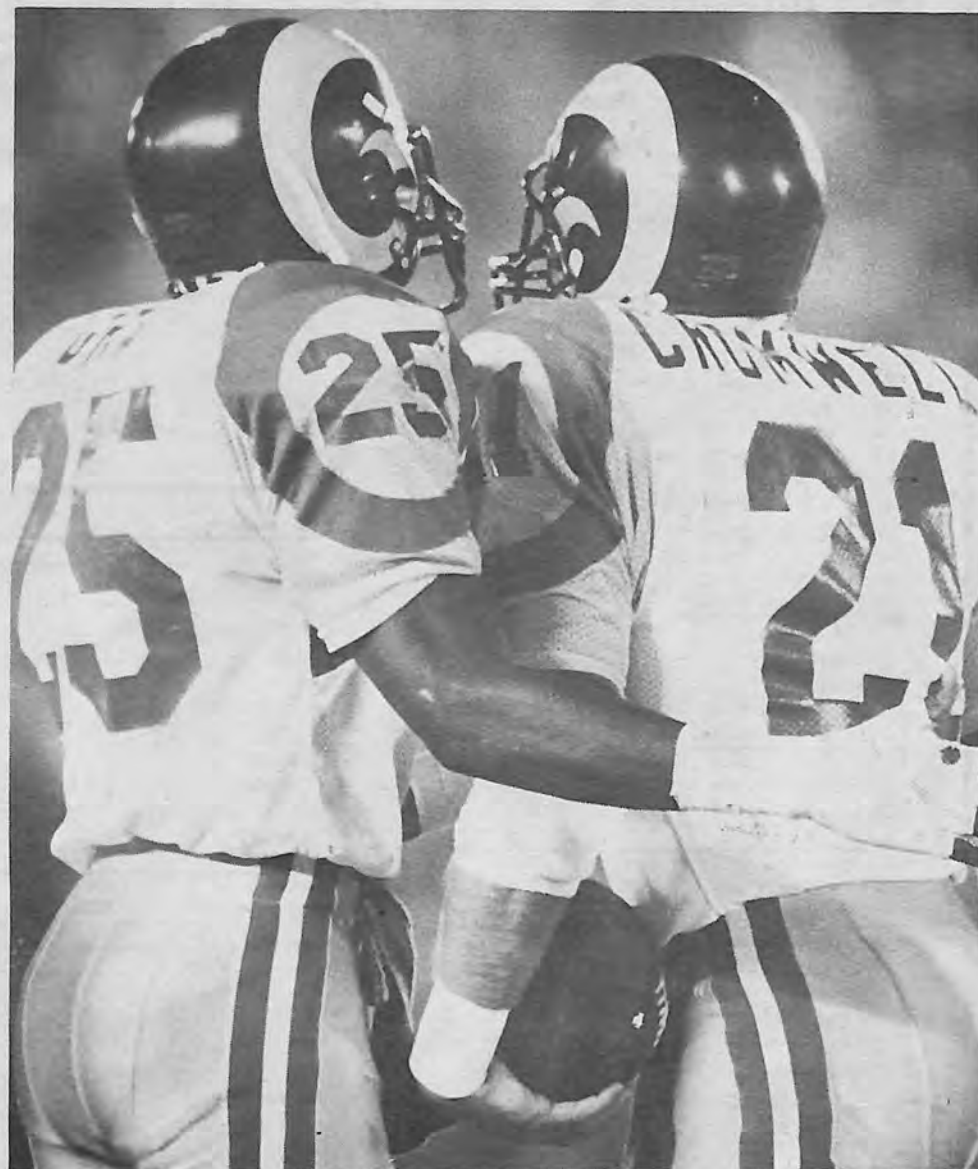
Prior to the 37-31 loss to Miami, Los Angeles' defense had been ranked much higher. But Dolphin quarterback Dan Marino threw for 403 yards, the most ever against the Rams. The 506 yards of total offense compiled by the Dolphins was the most the Rams had allowed since John Robinson became head coach in 1983.

The Los Angeles defense features three Pro Bowlers, linebacker Carl Ekern and cornerbacks LeRoy Irvin and Jerry Gray.

Continued Page 10



DEFENSIVE END REGGIE DOSS



JERRY GRAY AND NOLAN CROMWELL

Lineups

Washington

Los Angeles

Offense

WR 81 Art Monk, 89 Clarence Verdin
TE 85 Don Warren, 82 Anthony Jones
LT 66 Joe Jacoby, 60 Dan McQuaid
LG 68 Russ Grimm, 63 Raleigh McKenzie
C 53 Jeff Bostic, 63 Raleigh McKenzie
RG 69 R C Thieleman, 63 Raleigh McKenzie
RT 73 Mark May, 60 Dan McQuaid
TE 86 Clint Didier, 87 Terry Orr
WR 84 Gary Clark, 46 Ricky Sanders
QB 10 Jay Schroeder, 17 Doug Williams
RB 38 George Rogers, 24 Kelvin Bryant

WR 89 Ron Brown, 83 Kevin House
WR 80 Henry Ellard, 88 Michael Young
LT 75 Irv Pankey, 67 Duval Love
LG 66 Tom Newberry, 61 Tony Slaton
C 56 Doug Smith, 61 Tony Slaton
RG 60 Dennis Harrah, 61 Tony Slaton
RT 78 Jackie Slater, 67 Duval Love
TE 81 David Hill, 86 Damone Johnson
QB 11 Jim Everett, 8 Steve Dils
RB 30 Barry Redden, 32 Tim Tyrrell
RB 29 Eric Dickerson, 33 Charles White

Defense

LE 71 Charles Mann, 64 Steve Hamilton
LT 65 Dave Butz, 77 Darryl Grant
RT 77 Darryl Grant, 78 Dean Hamel
RE 72 Dexter Manley, 74 Markus Koch
LLB 56 Calvin Daniels, 51 Monte Coleman
MLB 52 Neal Olkewicz, 58 Shawn Burks
RLB 57 Rich Milot, 51 Monte Coleman
LCB 28 Darrell Green, 41 Tim Morrison
RCB 45 Barry Wilburn, 32 Vernon Dean
SS 40 Alvin Walton, 48 Ken Coffey
FS 22 Curtis Jordan, 23 Todd Bowles

DE 93 Doug Reed, 98 Shawn Miller
NT 98 Shawn Miller, 69 Greg Meisner
DE 71 Reggie Doss, 77 Gary Jeter
OLB 58 Mel Owens, 91 Kevin Greene
ILB 59 Mark Jerue, 52 Cliff Thrift
ILB 55 Carl Ekern, 57 Jim Laughlin
OLB 54 Mike Wilcher, 51 Norwood Vann
LC 25 Jerry Gray, 20 Johnnie Johnson
RC 47 LeRoy Irvin, 25 Jerry Gray
FS 22 Vince Newsome, 20 Johnnie Johnson
SS 21 Nolan Cromwell, 48 Tim Fox

Specialists

P 12 Steve Cox, 10 Jay Schroeder
K 14 Max Zendejas, 12 Steve Cox
PC 53 Jeff Bostic, 77 Darryl Grant
KC 53 Jeff Bostic, 77 Darryl Grant
PR 31 Ken Jenkins, 89 Clarence Verdin
KR 31 Ken Jenkins, 89 Clarence Verdin
H 10 Jay Schroeder, 17 Doug Williams

PK 1 Mike Lansford
P 3 Dale Hatcher
KR 89 Ron Brown, 33 Charles White
PR 80 Henry Ellard, 20 Johnnie Johnson
H 8 Steve Dils, 21 Nolan Cromwell
LS 90 Mike McDonald, 57 Jim Laughlin

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Bears Season Statistics

WON 13, LOST 2 (*OVERTIME)

Sept 7	W 41-31	Cleveland	66,030
Sept 14	AW 13-10	Philadelphia	65,130
Sept 22	W 25-12	at Green Bay	55,527
Sept 28	W 44-7	at Cincinnati	55,146
Oct 5	W 23-0	Minnesota	63,931
Oct 12	W 20-7	at Houston	46,026
Oct 19	L 7-23	at Minnesota	62,851
Oct 26	W 13-7	Detroit	62,064
Nov 3	L 17-20	Rams	64,877
Nov 9	W 23-3	at Tampa Bay	70,097
Nov 16	W 13-10	at Atlanta	55,520
Nov 23	W 12-10	Green Bay	59,291
Nov 30	AW 13-10	Pittsburgh	61,425
Dec 7	W 48-14	Tampa Bay	52,746
Dec 15	W 16-13	at Detroit	75,602
Dec 21		at Dallas	

TOTAL FIRST DOWNS

	Bears	Opponents
Rushing	156	64
Passing	112	140
Penalty	20	21
3rd Down: Made/Att	71/195	72/214
4th Down: Made/Att	5/12	10/19
TOTAL NET YARDS	5144	3870
Avg. Per Game	342.9	258.0
Total Plays	982	933
Avg. Per Play	5.2	4.1

NET YARDS RUSHING

Avg. Per Game	169.3	90.2
Total Rushes	569	402
NET YARDS PASSING	2605	2517
Avg. Per Game	173.7	167.8
Tackled/Yards Lost	20/134	55/436
Gross Yards	2739	2953
Att./Completions	393/199	476/225
Completion Pct.	50.6	47.3

Had Intercepted

22	28
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PUNTS/AVERAGE

64/ 40.5	92/ 40.8
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NET PUNTING AVG.

36.7	33.4
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PENALTIES/YARDS

94/ 747	101/ 786
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FUMBLES/BALL LOST

33/19	25/14
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TOUCHDOWNS

35	19
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Rushing

20	4
----	---

Passing

10	11
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Returns

5	4
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SCORE BY PERIODS

	1	2	3	4	OT	Total
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BEARS

81	70	79	92	6	328
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OPPONENTS

35	36	65	41	0	177
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SCORING

	IC	Ru	Pa	Rt	PAT	FT	TP
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Butler

0	0	0	33/34	27/40	0	114
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Payton

7	3	0	0/0	0/0	0	60
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Sanders

5	0	0	0/0	0/0	0	30
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Gault

0	4	0	0/0	0/0	0	24
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Gentry

1	0	2	0/0	0/0	0	18
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Tomczak

3	0	0	0/0	0/0	0	18
---	---	---	-----	-----	---	----

Marshall

0	0	2	0/0	0/0	0	12
---	---	---	-----	-----	---	----

Ortego

0	2	0	0/0	0/0	0	12
---	---	---	-----	-----	---	----

Suhey

2	0	0	0/0	0/0	0	12
---	---	---	-----	-----	---	----

Barnes

0	0	1	0/0	0/0	0	6
---	---	---	-----	-----	---	---

Flutie

1	0	0	0/0	0/0	0	6
---	---	---	-----	-----	---	---

McMahon

1	0	0	0/0	0/0	0	6
---	---	---	-----	-----	---	---

Moorehead

0	1	0	0/0	0/0	0	6
---	---	---	-----	-----	---	---

Hampton

0	0	0	0/0	0/0	1	2
---	---	---	-----	-----	---	---

McMichael

0	0	0	0/0	0/0	1	2
---	---	---	-----	-----	---	---

BEARS

20	10	5	33/35	27/40	2	328
----	----	---	-------	-------	---	-----

OPPONENTS

4	11	4	18/19	15/21	0	177
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SACKS: Hampton 9.5, Dent 9.5,

McMichael 8.5, Duerson 7.0, Wilson 6.0, Perry 4.0, Marshall 4.5, Harris 2.0, Singletary 1.0, Fencik 1.0, Hartenstine 1.0, Rivera 1.0, BEARS 55.0, OPPONENTS 20.0

PASSING

	Att	Cmp	Yds	Cmp%	Yds/Att	TD	Int	Int%	Long	Sack/Lost	Rating
--	-----	-----	-----	------	---------	----	-----	------	------	-----------	--------

McMahon

150	77	995	51.3	6.63	5	3.3	8	5.3	158	6/ 40	61.4
-----	----	-----	------	------	---	-----	---	-----	-----	-------	------

Tomczak

145	73	1084	50.3	7.48	2	1.4	9	6.2	85	4/ 30	53.9
-----	----	------	------	------	---	-----	---	-----	----	-------	------

Fuller

62	34	451	54.8	7.27	2	3.2	3	4.8	150	8/ 53	68.7
----	----	-----	------	------	---	-----	---	-----	-----	-------	------

Flutie

32	15	209	46.9	6.53	1	3.1	1	3.1	52	2/ 11	65.8
----	----	-----	------	------	---	-----	---	-----	----	-------	------

Payton

4	0	0	0.0	0.00	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0/ 0	0.0
---	---	---	-----	------	---	-----	---	------	---	------	-----

BEARS

393	199	2739	50.6	6.97	10	2.5	22	5.6	85	20/ 134	58.5
-----	-----	------	------	------	----	-----	----	-----	----	---------	------

OPPONENTS

476	225	2953	47.3	6.20	11	2.3	28	5.9	165	55/ 436	50.5
-----	-----	------	------	------	----	-----	----	-----	-----	---------	------

RUSHING

	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Payton	308	1282	4.2	41	1
Suhey	80	254	3.2	17	0
Sanders	25	351	9.6	175	1
Thomas	51	159	3.1	22	0
McMahon	23	152	6.6	18	0
Tomczak	23	117	5.1	18	0
Anderson	26	116	4.5	23	0
Gentry	9	96	10.7	29	1
Gault	7	68	9.7	35	0
Fuller	7	31	4.4	10	0
Flutie	9	17	1.9	8	0
Perry	1	-1	-1.0	-1	0
Buford	1	-13	-13.0	-13	0
BEARS	569	2539	4.5	175	20
OPPONENTS	402	1353	3.4	100	1

RECEIVING

	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Gault	41	785	19.1	100	4
Payton	36	377	10.5	57	3
Moorehead	25	375	15.0	55	1
Suhey	24	235	9.8	58	0
Ortego	23	430	18.7	156	2
Wrightman	21	215	10.2	29	0
Gentry	17	207	12.2	41	0
Barnes	4	54	13.5	14	0
Thomas	4	18	4.5	18	0
Anderson	2	17	8.5	9	0
Sanders	1	18	18.0	18	0
Bortz	1	8	8.0	8	0
BEARS	199	2739	13.8	156	10
OPPONENTS	225	2953	13.1	165	10

INTERCEPTIONS

	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Richardson	7	69	9.9	32	0
Duerson	6	139	23.2	38	0
Marshall	4	67	16.8	158	1
Fencik	3	37	12.3	24	0
Wilson	2	31	15.5	21	0
Jackson	2	0	0.0	0	0
Gayle	1	13	13.0	13	0
Phillips	1	6	6.0	6	0
Singletary	1	3	3.0	3	0
Bell	1	-1	-1.0	-1	0
BEARS	28	364	13.0	158	1
OPPONENTS	22	110	5.0	22	1

PUNTING

	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Buford	63	2591	41.1	76	59
BEARS	64	2591	40.5	76	59
OPPONENTS	92	3750	40.8	126	65

PUNT RETURNS

	Ret	EC	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Barnes	51	8	433	8.5	35	0
BEARS	51	8	433	8.5	35	0
OPPONENTS	21	13	105	5.0	15	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Gentry	20	576	28.8	191	1
Sanders	21	384	18.3	44	0
Anderson	4	26	6.5	13	0
Barnes	3	94	31.3	185	1
Gault	1	20	20.0	20	0
BEARS	49	1100	22.4	191	2
OPPONENTS	59	1257	21.3	55	0

FIELD GOALS

	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+
Butler	1/1	11/14	8/11	6/6	0/0
Opponents	0/0	5/6	3/4	4/6	3/5

Butler: (54N, 50N, 47G, 19G) (38N, 46N, 23G, 37N, 55N,

23G) (34G, 52G, 27G) (41G) (24G, 42G, 32G) (31G, 27G)

(1) (29G, 27G) (30G) (25G, 23G, 22G) (32G, 44G, 29N,

25N, 35N) (46N, 32G) (52N, 39G, 53N, 28N, 42G) (141G,

32G, 22G)

Opponents: (22G) (49G) (22G, 46G, 45G, 50G, 52N) (1

48N) (54N) (29G) (28N) (26G, 50G) (42G) (37G) (33N,

22G) (49N, 30G) (1) (52G, 39G)

Wild-Card

Continued From Page 8

Through 15 games, Ekern had 87 tackles. Gary had eight interceptions while Irvin had six. The team's tackle leader is safety Vince Newsome with 107. Gary Jeter leads the team in sacks with eight while Kevin Greene has seven.

Los Angeles offense vs. Washington defense

Through 15 games, the Rams' offense ranked 21st in the NFL, averaging 295 yards per game. The unit was 3rd rushing (157 per contest) and 28th passing (138 per game). The Rams have scored points, an average of 19.3 per game.

Under the direction of rookie quarterback Jim Everett during the past six weeks, the Rams defeated the Saints, Jets and Cowboys, but lost to the Patriots, Dolphins and 49ers. He had a 81.3 rating prior to the regular season finale. The 49ers intercepted him three times.

Even though he missed half the season due to a contract dispute, wide receiver Henry Ellard led the Rams in receiving this year. Through 15 games, he had caught 31 for 406 yards and four touchdowns. Speedster Ron Brown had caught only 25 for 396.

Eric Dickerson led the NFL in rushing with 1,821 yards. Leading the way for him are Pro Bowl starters Jackie Slater and Harrah, and Pro Bowl reserve center Doug Smith.

Washington's defense ranks 20th in the NFL, allowing 336 yards per game. The unit ranks 12th vs. the rush (110 per game) and 23rd vs. the pass (225 per contest). On the season, the unit allowed 296 points, an average of 18.5 per game.

The Redskin defense has two Pro Bowl starters, defensive Dexter Manley (17.5 sacks) and cornerback Darrell Green (five interceptions). Washington's tackle leaders include Neal Olkewicz (164), Curtis Jordan (158) and Rick Miot (124).

The special teams

The Redskins have used four placekickers this year. They started the season with Mark Moseley, but he was cut and replaced by Zendejas. When Zendejas was placed on injured-reserve last week, the Skins signed free agent Jess Atkinson. Punter Steve Cox has also attempted six field goals this year, connecting on three of them.

As a punter, Cox ranks 2nd in the league with a 44.1 average. Return specialist Ken Jenkins is 4th in the league with a 9.6 average on punt returns, and ranks 7th as a kick returner with a 20.5 average.

Los Angeles placekicker Mike Lansford connected on 17 of 24 field goal attempts during the regular season. Ram punter Dale Hatcher ranks 13th in the NFC with a 38.4 average. Brown ranks 5th in the NFC as a kick returner with a 22.1 average. Ellard is averaging 8.9 on punt returns.

1987 Schedule

The Bears' 1987 schedule will be tougher than this year's as Chicago faces four 1986 playoff teams next year.

Chicago's schedule includes four games at home and four on the road against each of its NFC Central Division rivals, Minnesota, Green Bay, Detroit and Tampa Bay.

Chicago's other home games will be against the Giants, Kansas City Chiefs, New Orleans Saints and Los Angeles Raiders.

The other four road games are against the Philadelphia Eagles, Denver Broncos, San Francisco 49ers and Seattle Seahawks.

The dates and times for the games will be released later by the NFL.

Bears' Schedule

REGULAR SEASON

BEARS 41, Cleveland 31
BEARS 13, Philadelphia 10 OT
BEARS 25, Green Bay 12
BEARS 44, Cincinnati 7
BEARS 23, Minnesota 0
BEARS 20, Houston 7

Experience important for QB's in playoffs

The Bears always have found beating opponents more interesting when they can topple history in the bargain. So maybe it's not so bad that no team has won a Super Bowl starting a young, back-up quarterback. The Bears can. Mike Tomczak is in his second year, Doug Flutie in his first.

Even if they try to do it with Steve Fuller, in his eighth season, the 1980 Raiders are the only precedent to have won a Super Bowl with any back-up starting at quarterback.

By
Kevin
Lamb



"Everybody thinks we definitely can't win without him," linebacker Otis Wilson said after Jim McMahon was declared out for the season. "So I guess we've got to prove everybody wrong."

Even Fuller lacks the experience Jim Plunkett had with the 1980 Oakland Raiders. Plunkett was firmly established in his job after leading the Raiders to 12 victories in his 14 starts. Fuller led the Bears within one game of the Super Bowl two years ago, but he went into the finale at Dallas firmly established in coach Mike Ditka's doghouse after starting the team's only 1986 defeats. As a confidence builder, this season has been a ball and chain.

Flutie would be the first rookie quarterback to start for

any Super Bowl team. The only second-year starter was Dan Marino for Miami two years ago, when the Dolphins lost and Marino had probably the worst game of his career.

The 1971 Cowboys' Roger Staubach, the 1981 49ers' Joe Montana, the 1982 Dolphins' David Woodley and the 1979 Rams' Vince Ferragamo started Super Bowls in their third seasons. But Staubach and Montana were the only winners, and they, like Marino, had led the conference in passing. You'd have to combine the stats of Tomczak, Fuller and Flutie to qualify for the NFC passing lead this year, and Tomczak would have ranked last going into the Dallas game.

Super Bowl quarterbacks need experience

The main point all this history makes is that inexperienced quarterbacks haven't won Super Bowls. Even Tomczak acknowledges the value of experience, which he was trying to devour by the shovelful before his leg bruise at Detroit moved him to the back of the line.

"It builds your confidence," he said. "It's great to practice, but there's nothing like game-time experience. As you continue to mature, you're faced with certain important situations and you're going to make mistakes. The next time you face them, hopefully you'll respond better."

There's no substitute for experience. Football boils down to reacting to situations. The more often you've seen one, the better you react to it.

"You don't have to think as much. You just do things automatically," guard Mark Bortz says. And for a quarterback facing a pass rush, there is no time to think.

"There are so many things a defensive team can do," Bear coordinator Vince Tobin says. "You've got to be able to recognize immediately which one they're doing now. Every defense has its strengths and weaknesses, and you've got to know where to go against it. That only comes with experience, seeing things over and over."

David Woodley knows that as well as anyone. Unlike Ferragamo, who had begun his Super Bowl season as a back-up, Woodley was a 2½ year starter essentially filling in until the Dolphins found someone better. They did. They drafted Marino three months after the Super Bowl. Four years later, Woodley runs a racketball club near Miami.

"I was virtually unknown outside Miami," Woodley says now. "When I went to the Super Bowl, I was the center of attention. Everybody wants to know where you're from, what you eat, what you do, everything."

"You have a tendency to get caught up in all that. The game becomes almost secondary. I think that's why most Super Bowls are such poorly played games. It's difficult to focus on the real issue, which is the football game. Especially if you're young."

"If I had to do over, I would probably be a lot less available. Because once the game's over, if you lose, nobody wants to know who you are. If you win, then you've got the world."

Lorres can prove valuable

Through the playoffs, Woodley says, it was valuable that he had played for the Dolphin team that had lost in the previous playoffs. Tomczak and Flutie have never lost an NFL playoff game, although most of their teammates have.

"You lose and you're out," Woodley says. "It's something you know. Coaches can tell you. But it's something you actually have to go through yourself, to feel the shock of having your season end like that."

Besides, the playoff teams have the best defenses. This year especially, defense is carrying the top NFC teams. And the best defenses can make things toughest for young quarterbacks.

They can do more things, and do them better. They don't do what's expected. The Bears have seen that all season.

"The biggest thing they do is disguise their intentions," Woodley says. "They'll show you things you've never seen before. They'll give you a different look early in the game, like a safety blitz, and then they'll use that same look later to disguise what they really want to do."

"I'd see it and I'd be thinking, here it comes again. But they'd come with something else."

"Even from my second to my third year, it was a big difference. You'd see that and you'd know exactly what they were doing and it wouldn't bother you anymore. But in the second year, you'd guess: What are they going to do now?"

Continued Page 14



Doug Flutie got a little more experience in preparation for the playoffs during Sunday's game against the Cowboys. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

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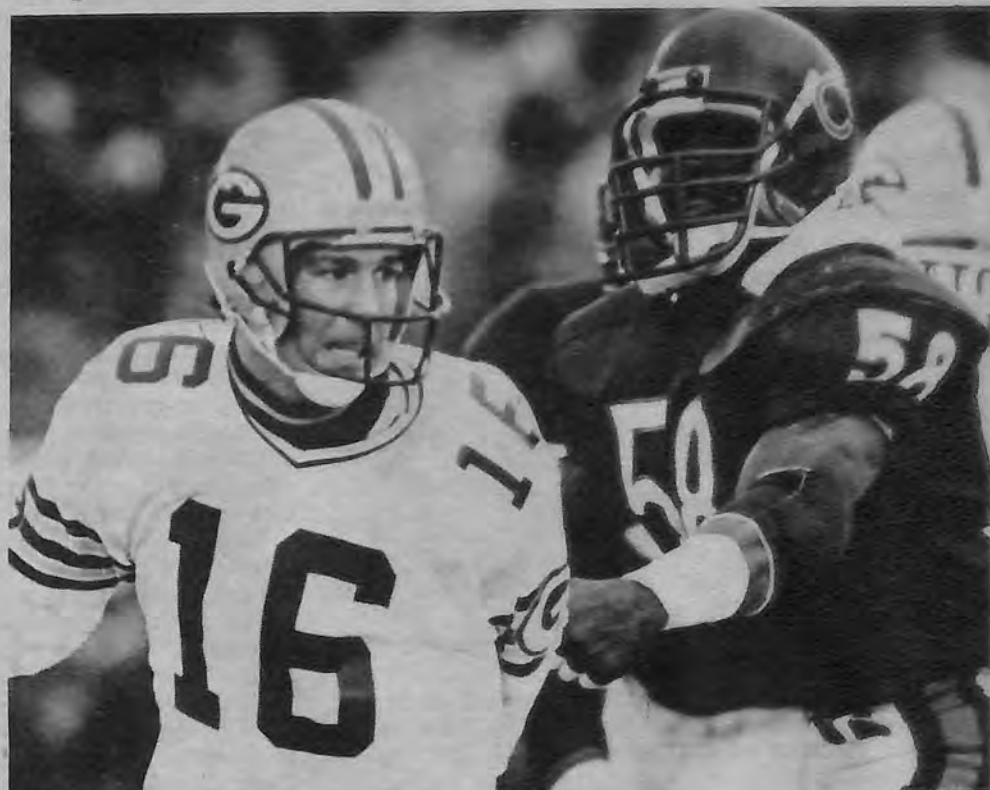
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Seven Bears make Pro-Bowl team



DAVE DUERSON



WILBER MARSHALL

Though seven Bears were named to the NFC Pro Bowl team last week most players on the team were upset about those Bears left off the team.

Chosen for the first time from the Bears were defensive tackle Steve McMichael and linebacker Wilber Marshall. Other Bears named to the team were running back Walter Payton, middle linebacker Mike Singletary, strong safety Dave Duerson, tackle Jim Covert and center Jay Hilgenberg. All of them have previously played in the Pro Bowl. The game will be played Feb. 1 in Honolulu.

Three Bears who made the team last year were not included on this year's squad. They are defensive ends Dan Hampton and Richard Dent and linebacker Otis Wilson.

The Bears had two fewer players selected this year than last year, when nine players were selected. Chicago lost one player each from the offense and the defense. Voting is done by the NFC players.

Among the most irate Bears about the snubs was McMichael. "We've been the number one defense the last three years. There should be at least eight of us going," he said. "I don't know what the players are doing who are voting, but they darn sure aren't playing against Dan and Richard. It's a travesty."

The Giants led the conference with eight players going. The Rams had seven players selected and the Redskins

six. All seven Bears were selected as starters, while the Giants have only four players starting.

Dent blamed weak blocking in the NFC East for his being left out. Four of the top five sack leaders made the team. And all of them — Lawrence Taylor and Leonard Marshall of the Giants, Dexter Manley of the Redskins and Reggie White of the Eagles — play in the East division.

"The only way you do it is by getting stats. And there's nobody over there blocking," Dent said.

"It's a shame," Marshall said about some of his teammates being left out. "When you got other players voting they don't want to have too many of the same guys. Mike Richardson had a great year. I just don't understand why he didn't make it. Teams are not scoring deep on us and it's because of those guys back there."

Added Singletary, "I'm really surprised that only four guys are representing the defense. I don't know why it happens. I think we've gained a reputation around the league as being one of those dirty ballclubs. And I don't think that's true. It's a very unfortunate rap we've taken."

Also left off the team from the Bears were two special teams stars, Dennis Gentry and Neal Anderson. Two Cardinals beat them out, kick returner Vai Sikahema and special teams player Ron Wolfley.

"I've never seen Wolfley play so I'm not sure how good he is," Anderson said. But he wasn't upset at not making the team. "Anytime you do well and even talk about the chance of going to the Pro Bowl, that's good in itself," he said.

Both Duerson and Hilgenberg credited the people they play with for their selection. "The reason I'm able to play the way I do is because of the guys that play around me," Duerson said.

Added Hilgenberg, "I'm just one person that's representing the whole offensive line."

Bears coach Mike Ditka was happy for his players that made the team, but he wasn't overly concerned with it. "It's a great honor for those guys," he said. "But the bowl we're looking for is not the Pro Bowl. I'm glad to see Steve McMichael get the recognition he deserves."

Marshall, left off the team last year, also was glad he got some recognition. "I worked all year for it for two years," he said. "It's just the start of a beginning for me."

Wilson, on the other hand, was philosophical about his snub. "What the hell, I get the rest when this is all over with," he said. "I'm still going to Hawaii, I just have to pay for it."

Continued Page 15



WALTER PAYTON



STEVE MCMICHAEL

Practice getting hard in cold weather

At least one Bear was dissatisfied with the team's bally-hoed attempts to keep the practice field warm with heat blowers recently.

"I think they wasted \$50,000," said wide receiver Willie Gault. Gault said practice was a joke the Thursday before the Lion Monday night game when temperatures plunged and snowy winds whipped across a field that was supposed to have been kept warm by the new equipment.

"The field froze less than an hour after they took the covering off," he said. "And we could only practice on half the field. The other half was covered by the tarp and they couldn't get it off because it was weighted down by snow."

Gault said the frozen field greatly increased the chance of player injury.

The Bears are the only cold weather team in the NFC Central without easy access to an indoor practice facility.

next year and the Super Bowl the year after that.

Other Ryan grades:

An "A" to the Philadelphia fans; a "B" to the coaching staff; a "B" to the players and, of course, a "C-" to the local news media.

MEYER WEENER:

Newly-appointed Colt head coach Ron Meyer will fit nicely into owner Bob Irsay's menagerie if the statements Meyer made recently about Heisman Trophy winning quarterback Vinny Testaverde are any indication.

"I like our quarterback," Meyer said referring to Gary Hogeboom. "I'm not even sure that (the quarterback position) is a priority."

The Colts had an inside track at earning the first pick in the first round of next spring's college draft until two late wins brought Tampa Bay into the picture.

TESTA-MONY:

If the Colts do somehow end up with Testaverde, Irsay says he isn't interested in trading him.

"I would say it's 99.9 percent we're going to keep him," Irsay said. "I personally think he's in the same class as (Dolphin Dan) Marino and (Ram Jim) Everett. I guess if the Giants offered Lawrence Taylor, Joe Morris and four or five other players, I might consider a trade. I'd be nuts not to take it. But nobody's going to give me what I want."

LET'S MAKE A DEAL:

Meanwhile the rumor mill is rife with offers other teams are considering making in the quest for Testaverde.

RAMS — Quarterback Jim Everett, running back Barry Redden and wide receiver Henry Ellard for Testaverde.

SEATTLE — Safety Kenny Easley, defensive end Jeff Bryant and a first rounder for Testaverde.

RAIDERS — Running back Marcus Allen, wide receiver Jessie Hester and defensive lineman Greg Townsend for Testaverde.

ATLANTA — Running back Gerald Riggs, nose tackle Tony Casillas and two first rounders for Testaverde.

HONEST JOHN:

The last time the Colts had a shot at a quarterback of Testaverde's caliber it was John Elway. Elway smartly used the threat of a pro baseball career to force a trade

that sent him to Denver. He has never looked back.

"We've got a stat board in our room," Elway said after Week 14. "And when I see the Colts at 1-13, it makes my decision even that much more right."

ZIPPERED LIPS:

And finally, the fallout from the recent 27-23 Falcon loss to the Colts is still scattering throughout Georgia, where head coach Dan Henning instructed players not to talk to the press.

Atlanta is struggling and Henning's job is reportedly on the line again. Atlanta executive vice-president Taylor Smith labeled the Colt loss, "sickening."

BENSON'S HEDGE:

New York Giant tackle Brad Benson became the first lineman ever to win the NFC Offensive Player of the Week award for holding Washington's Dexter Manley sackless in the Dec. 7 24-14 Giant win. "That means I'm hellacious," said Manley.

Benson was so intense in his preparations for Manley that his wife temporarily moved out of their house the Thursday before the game. "The problem was I didn't even know she was gone," Benson said.

DEXTER-ITY:

After 14 weeks Manley was the NFL's leading sacker since 1982 with 63½. Jet Mark Gastineau was No. 2 with 62½. The next 10, in order were: Giant Lawrence Taylor 60½, Seahawk Jacob Green 57½, Patriot Andre Tippett 53, Eagle Greg Brown 49½, Raider Howie Long 47½, Bear Richard Dent 46, Cardinal Curtis Greer 44½, Dolphin Doug Betters 43½, Saint Rickey Jackson 43½ and Cowboy Randy White 43½.

NOTES AND QUOTES: Philadelphia coach Buddy Ryan, a former Jet assistant, on the death threats leveled at Dallas coach Tom Landry recently: "We were playing in Dallas 100 years ago when they had a threat on Joe Namath. The only thing you do is, you just don't stand by Joe Namath. You just don't stand by Landry. I think across the field will be far enough." ... Several weeks ago Cleveland punter Jeff Gossett shanked five punts against Houston. The next week he kicked five out inside the 11 yard line of Buffalo. Gossett on the post-Houston media reaction: "They hop all over you like vultures, as if you're dead." ... Tampa Bay guard Sean Farrell after being heckled by a spectator: "Look, why don't we talk about this Monday when you pick up my trash." ... Patriot coach Raymond Berry after New England's 31-7 loss to Cincinnati: "I'm sure something good came out of this for us. I'm just not smart enough to know what it is."

By
Brian
Hewitt



NFL Notebook

HONOR ROLE:

It's that time of the season so Philadelphia head coach Buddy Ryan is passing out end-of-year report cards. The grade he gives himself: "A +." The Eagles were 5-9-1 after 15 weeks.

"I know that sounds arrogant," Ryan said. "But I believe it. I can't see any mistakes. I should have claimed (tight end) Jimmie Giles off the waiver wire. But there's nobody I let go that I wish I could pull back."

"We're 10 times better now than when I got here. We're young and getting better. It's going to be beautiful."

Ryan went on to predict the Eagles will make the playoffs



The Bears held Dallas' backfield duo of Herschel Walker (34) and Tony Dorsett to a total of 68 yards on the ground in Sunday's game. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

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Flutie

Continued From Page 3

goal that just made it over the crossbar to cut Chicago's lead to 24-3.

Dallas scored a touchdown with just 15 seconds left in the game on an 11-yard pass from Steve Pelluer to Mike Renfro to make the final 24-10. The touchdown pass came against Mike Richardson, stopping his bid to go the entire season without giving up a touchdown pass.

But the Bears did manage to keep other records going. They finished the season with a streak of 33 quarters in which they haven't given up a rushing touchdown. And the defense set a new record for least points allowed in a 16-game season.

The Bears allowed just 187 points this year, breaking the record of 195 set by the 1978 Steelers. Last year the Bears gave up 198 points.

"A lot of things have been put to rest, period," Ditka said. "Take that any way you want."

"The way the defense played under Vince Tobin and the records they set is just great. I'm just so proud of what the players and the coaching staff have accomplished this year."

"I can't say enough about the effort they put into this season. The way we prepare, our assistant coaches are just excellent. They do such a great job for us."

Anderson still impressing Ditka

Ditka also had praise for Anderson, who had another great day on special teams and ran the ball well for 30 yards on 9 carries.

"I liked the effectiveness of Neal," Ditka said. "I think he can do a lot of things besides running the ball. He's got great speed and made a great catch. The more he plays the more I know he's something special. He makes things happen and has great leadership qualities."

Now all that's left to see is if the players and staff can continue doing the job it takes to win another Super Bowl.

As Willie Gault said, "If we play error-free football we can control our own destiny."

GAME NOTES: Despite Sunday's win by the Bears, Dallas still leads the series 9-5. The Cowboys had won six straight games before the Bears' 44-0 win last year at Texas Stadium. Before that game the Bears' last win against Dallas was in 1971, when Mike Ditka was a Cowboys' tight end. Chicago is now 2-4 at Texas Stadium... Since 1984 Ditka is 39-9 in regular season games. He is 2-1 against the Cowboys. Sunday's win was Ditka's 50th regular season win... The Bears are the first NFL team to have back-to-back 13-win regular seasons since the Frankfort Yellowjackets in 1925-26. The Bears and Giants are the only two pro franchises with three 13-win regular seasons in their history. The Bears have done it in 1934, 1985 and 1986... The Bears have won 10 of their last 12 sea-

son finales... Mike Richardson became only the fourth Bear since 1963 to have seven interceptions in one season when he picked off his seventh pass against Detroit... Chicago's win over Detroit was its seventh come-from-behind win this season and the fifth game it has won by a field goal or less this year... Going into the Dallas game the Bears hadn't allowed a rushing touchdown in their last seven games. Chicago had allowed just four rushing touchdowns all season and five touchdowns in the last 33 quarters. In 13 of its first 15 games this season Chicago has allowed one touchdown or less... Entering Sunday's game Walter Payton had rushed for 100 yards or more in four of his six games against Dallas. In 1981 he gained 179 yards against the Cowboys.

Lamb

Continued From Page 11

Confidence another big factor

It's hard not for a young quarterback to be tentative. Even Fuller, perhaps gun-shy over being yanked for interceptions, developed a hesitant shuffle at the end of his drop that disrupted pass-route timing and left him more vulnerable to sacks. Flutie, with less than a month of offensive practice, has been tentative just calling plays, let alone executing them. Tomczak hasn't always planted his back foot, Ditka says, and has gotten into trouble guiding the ball instead of letting it rip. That happens when a quarterback has to follow thought processes instead of second nature.

"There's times he makes mistakes or gets nervous," Thayer says. "But there's also times he makes big plays by himself."

That is the kind of experience the Bears' fill-in quarterbacks need most. It's too late now. The playoffs are starting. The Bears held out hope for too long that McMahon would return, ignoring his painful symptoms instead of investigating them, and were left with only three weeks to develop both Tomczak and Flutie into playoff quarterbacks. When Tomczak was hurt, they were left with one game and virtually no recent experience at quarterback.

They can overcome that problem. They, more than any other NFL team, have the defense to do it. But it would be nice if the Bears went into the playoffs with a quarterback remembering recent touchdown passes. Confident he could make first-down scrambles. Knowing he had made big third-down plays. Absolutely certain he would make the plays that overcome the inevitable mistakes.

"He's got to know he can do it when he has to do it," tight end Emery Moorehead says. "It's going to intensify in the playoffs. Every play is so intense. It's important that he has confidence in what he's doing, and for us to have confidence in him."



Jim McMahon was in Dallas Sunday watching the game after leaving Los Angeles where he underwent shoulder surgery Dec. 12. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)



Wilber Marshall looks for some running room after intercepting a pass during Chicago's final regular season game Sunday against the Cowboys. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

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Pro Bowl

Continued From Page 12

National Conference

Offense

WIDE RECEIVERS: Jerry Rice, San Francisco 49ers; Gary Clark, Washington Redskins; *Art Monk, Washington Redskins; *Mike Quick, Philadelphia Eagles.

TIGHT ENDS: Mark Bavaro, New York Giants; *Steve Jordan, Minnesota Vikings.

TACKLES: Jimbo Covert, BEARS; Jackie Slater, Los Angeles Rams; *Brad Benson, New York Giants.

GUARDS: Dennis Harrah, Los Angeles Rams; Bill Fralic, Atlanta Falcons; *Russ Grimm, Washington Redskins.

CENTERS: Jay Hilgenberg, BEARS; *Doug Smith, Los Angeles Rams.

QUARTERBACKS: Tommy Kramer, Minnesota Vikings; *Jay Schroeder, Washington Redskins.

RUNNING BACKS: Eric Dickerson, Los Angeles Rams; Walter Payton, BEARS; *Joe Morris, New York Giants; Rueben Mayes, New Orleans Saints.

Defense

ENDS: Dexter Manley, Washington Redskins; Reggie White, Philadelphia Eagles; *Leonard Marshall, New York Giants.

TACKLES: Steve McMichael, BEARS; *Jim Burt, New York Giants.

OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS: Lawrence Taylor, New York Giants; Wilber Marshall, BEARS; *Rickey Jackson, New Orleans Saints.

INSIDE LINEBACKERS: Mike Singletary, BEARS; Harry Carson, New York Giants; *Carl Ekern, Los Angeles Rams.

CORNERBACKS: Darrell Green, Washington Redskins; LeRoy Irwin, Los Angeles Rams; *Jerry Gray, Los Angeles Rams.

SAFETIES: Dave Duerson, BEARS; Ronnie Lott, San Francisco 49ers; *Joey Browner, Minnesota Vikings.

Specialists

KICKER: Morten Anderson, New Orleans.

PUNTER: Sean Landeta, New York Giants.

KICK RETURNER: Vai Sikahema, St. Louis Cardinals.

SPECIAL TEAMS PLAYER: Ron Wolfley, St. Louis Cardinals.

American Conference

Offense

WIDE RECEIVERS: Al Toon, New York Jets; Steve Largent, Seattle Seahawks; *Stanley Morgan, New England Patriots; *Mark Duper, Miami Dolphins.

TIGHT ENDS: Todd Christensen, Los Angeles Raiders; *Mickey Shuler, New York Jets.

TACKLES: Anthony Munoz, Cincinnati Bengals; Cody Risien, Cleveland Browns; *Chris Hinton, Indianapolis Colts.

GUARDS: Max Montoya, Cincinnati Bengals; Keith Bishop, Denver Broncos; *Roy Foster, Miami Dolphins.

CENTERS: Dwight Stephenson, Miami Dolphins; *Ray Donaldson, Indianapolis Colts.

QUARTERBACKS: Dan Marino, Miami Dolphins; *John Elway, Denver Broncos.

RUNNING BACKS: Curt Warner, Seattle Seahawks; James Brooks, Cincinnati Bengals; *Marcus Allen, Los Angeles Raiders; *Gary Anderson, San Diego Chargers.

Defense

ENDS: Rulon Jones, Denver Broncos; Howie Long, Los

Angeles Raiders; *Jacob Green, Seattle Seahawks.

TACKLES: Bill Maas, Kansas City Chiefs; *Bob Golic, Cleveland Browns.

OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS: Andre Tippett, New England Patriots; Chip Banks, Cleveland Browns; *Mike Merriweather, Pittsburgh.

INSIDE LINEBACKERS: Karl Mecklenburg, Denver Broncos; John Offerdahl, Miami Dolphins; *Fredd Young, Seattle Seahawks.

SAFETIES: Deron Cherry, Kansas City Chiefs; Dennis Smith, Denver Broncos; *Lloyd Burruss, Kansas City Chiefs.

CORNERBACKS: Mike Haynes, Los Angeles Raiders; Hanford Dixon, Cleveland Browns; *Ray Clayborn, New England Patriots.

Specialists

KICKER: Tony Franklin, New England Patriots.

PUNTER: Rohn Stark, Indianapolis Colts.

KICK RETURNER: Bobby Joe Edmonds, Seattle Seahawks.

SPECIAL TEAMS PLAYER: Mosi Tatupu, New England Patriots.

* = reserve

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Bear Report Letters

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Bears Win With Talent

Dear Doug,

The Chicago Bears have shown that they can win with talent, poise and coaching (Ditka, not Buddy Ryan). A great team can do this because of talent. It shows that last year's brashness was no fluke. I cannot see anyone stopping the Bears in their quest of a second straight Super Bowl victory.

John P. Kay
Miami Springs, FL

Bears Won't Make It To Super Bowl

Dear Editor:

Congratulations to Mike Ditka and the Bears players for another great and entertaining season.

And there is no doubt that Ditka and the players deserve nearly all the credit for the accomplishments of the past two seasons. Ditka's drive, judgments of players' talents, courage to make tough decisions and handle the many battling egos in the organization, and especially his courage to not stand still in the face of adversity, are to be greatly admired. He's done a great job!

However, I don't believe the Bears can pull off another Super Bowl victory with McMahon injured. Tomczak has certainly improved, and Flutie has impressed us and is probably the Bears' quarterback of the future. Yet, it is difficult to believe that either can win against the strong defenses in the playoffs.

Tomczak still looks at his primary receivers throughout a pass play. He throws crucial interceptions or fumbles, especially early in a game. Against playoff teams, this is enough to lose.

Flutie is still largely an unknown, at least as a professional player. And, I doubt that either can read a defense, audible, improvise, or command respect of the offense as does McMahon.

Yet the defense is still great and the coaching is great. It all comes down to playing the Giants in New York for the NFC Championship.

I hope I'm proven wrong.

Jim Grazis
Steamboat Springs, CO

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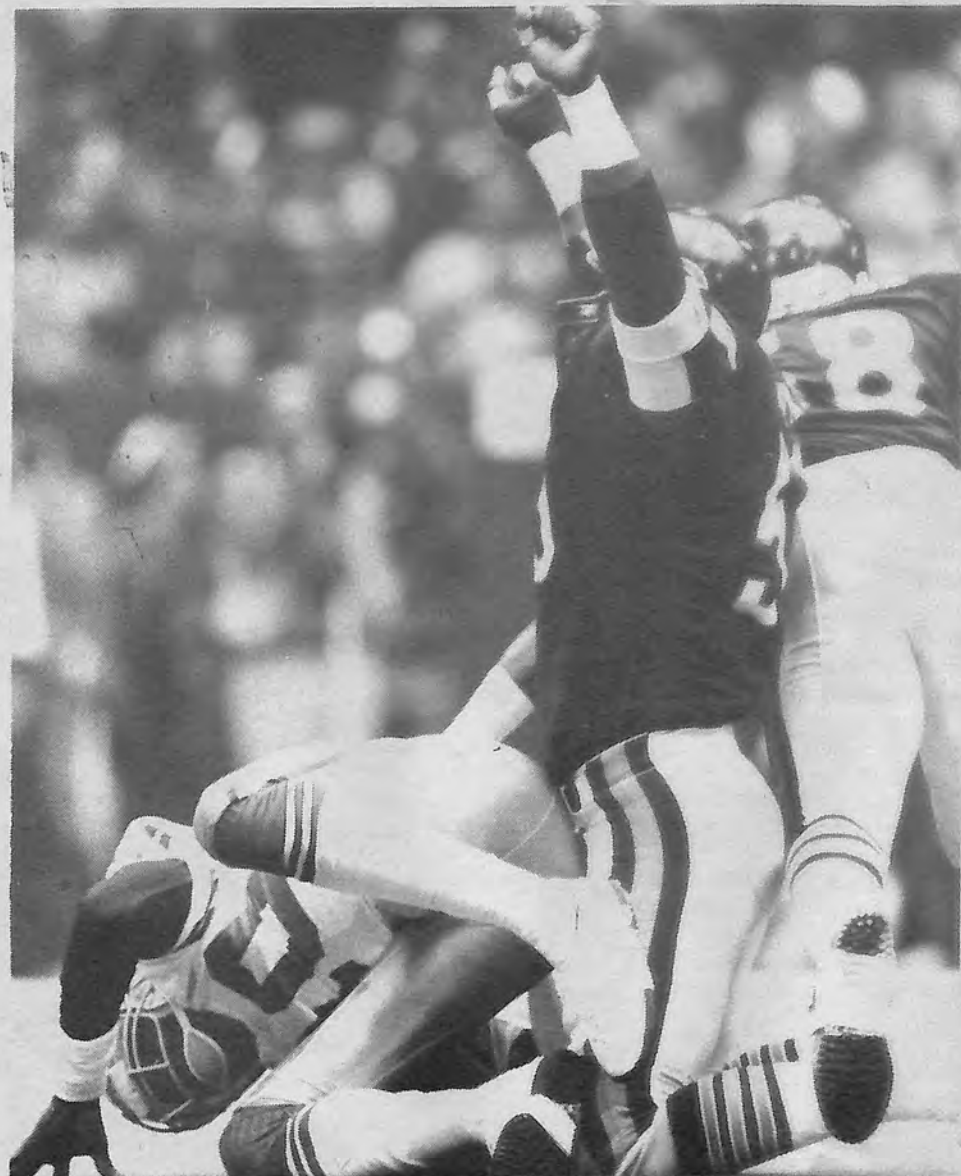
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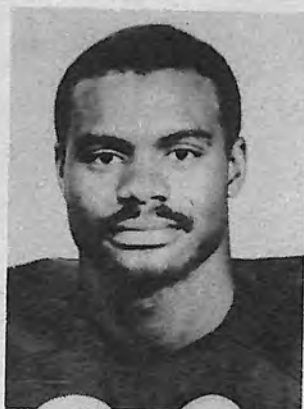


Otis Wilson and Wilber Marshall combine for this sack against Dallas in the fourth quarter of Sunday's game...



and Wilson shows his feelings about the big play. A few days earlier he was snubbed from the NFC Pro Bowl team. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

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